

DPCR Alumni Association Annual Report 2017 – 2018

The board of the DPCR Alumni Association for the period 2017 – 2018 consisted of Charlotte Grech-Madin (President), Chris Chau (Vice-President), Stefan Döring (Secretary), Magnus Öberg (Treasurer) and Christofer Hägg (Department Liaison). Below follows an overview of the Association's activities during 2017 – 2018.

Activities

The first event of the autumn semester was an alumnus talk by Henrik Persson, ecumenical accompanier in Israel/Palestine. The talk was held on UN Day, October 24. Henrik shared rich insights from his recent mission to the West Bank. His talk covered everyday life on the ground - the impact of the house demolitions, and the struggles of the people there. Complementing Henrik's talk was an excellent round table discussion with two former ecumenical accompaniers to Israel – Mathilda Lindgren, peace researcher/leadership developer, and Maria Lundin, practitioner in peace and development policy. The panel reflected upon Henrik's experiences, discussed the role of international bodies (such as the UN), and emphasised the importance of harbouring hope in moving forward with the conflict.

The second event, also in the autumn semester, was an alumnus talk by the current Swedish Ambassador to Afghanistan, Tobias Thyberg. This took place on November 29, and was co-organised with the Political Science Alumni Association. Ambassador Thyberg offered excellent insights into the current security situation of Afghanistan, with special focus on Trump's U.S. strategy for Afghanistan, the status of the Taliban insurgency, the development of domestic policy, and Sweden's long-term engagement in the country. The event was well attended, and the Ambassador answered a number of questions from the audience, ranging from corruption and environmental security, to youth unemployment and the continual efforts toward peace in the country. Ambassador Thyberg began the Ambassadorial post this year, after previously serving as Deputy Representative of Sweden to the EU Political and Security Committee. He has also served at embassies in New Delhi, Moscow and Washington, and at the EU Delegation in Tbilisi, Georgia.

At the time of writing this report, the main focus of the spring semester is the annual "Alumni Talks" series, this year featuring alumnus Prof. Gilberto Rodrigues of the Federal University of ABC, in São Paulo (Brazil). Prof Rodrigues is in Sweden in late May as part of the evaluation panel of the New Shape Prize (Latin America), and is able to come to Uppsala to share his expertise. The event will take place on May 30, and will be moderated by Prof. Peter Wallensteen. Prof. Rodrigues will talk about refugees and the politico-humanitarian challenges that they face. He will also present the work of the Sergio Vieira de Mello Chair on refugee services that he co-coordinates at the Federal University of ABC in collaboration with UNHCR. The Alumni Talks series have been filmed, and can be viewed online via links available at: <http://www.pcr.uu.se/alumni/>. Information on all activities throughout the year has been distributed via email lists to members, as well as posted in the Association's Facebook group.

Finances

The Department of Peace and Conflict Research has supported the Association by covering various costs in connection to the Association's activities. Examples of such costs include canapés, beverages and flowers to accompany events, and also filming of the spring Alumni Talk with Prof. Rodrigues.

Newsletter

The annual DPCR Alumni Association newsletter has been continued this year, as per tradition, and is to be sent out in early May. The newsletter includes, among other items: an interview with Prof. Gilberto Rodrigues (Brazil); a "Head's-up" feature on two former Heads of Department – Magnus Öberg and Erik Noreen; and an interview with the Department's long-standing financial officer Anna Norrman-Hedenmark. It also features news from the Department, as well as Class Notes. Class Notes are a collection of brief updates from our former Bachelor, Master and PhD students (as well as staff members) from all around the world. The aim is to enhance a sense of community and strengthen the connections between alumni, and their connection back to the Department. We hope that this feature will be continued in future newsletters.

Collaborations and communication

The Association has worked to build and maintain cooperation and contact with the two student organizations at the Department, UPaD and Pax et Bellum, along with Alumnföreningen Uppsalapolitices (Political Science Alumni Association). We have collaborated on some events, and cooperated in the dissemination of information about our respective organizations and events through social media platforms. We also held a joint meeting together on October 18, 2017 to discuss how to better support one another. On the communications front, our Secretary (Stefan Döring) has created an Instagram account for the Association, which strives to connect DPCR alumni and showcase their recent activities and achievements. This is entitled "dpcr.alumni", and is accessible at: <https://www.instagram.com/dpcr.alumni/>. All alumni are welcome to follow this, and to submit their latest news and photos. Use of the hashtag #DPCRconnects is warmly encouraged.

Charlotte Grech-Madin
President, DPCR Alumni Association
May 1, 2018